

CWD UPDATE

September 18, 2003

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has reported two additional positive male mule deer from the archery season this fall. One deer was taken on Diamond Mountain east of Vernal and the other on the LaSal Mountains east of Moab. Both were adult animals. A total of 205 deer were tested during the archery hunt.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department reports positive deer from three locations. One was a clinical animal in a town herd in Sarasota. Another was one found dead in the town of Lusk and the third a clinical found approximately 12 miles southeast of Moorcroft. The Sarasota finding is from outside the normal range of CWD in that state and the agency is collecting additional samples from that area. The Lusk and Moorcroft findings represent the furthest east and furthest north positives from Wyoming.

The Wisconsin DNR has instituted a reward program in order to entice hunters to kill and submit deer and to entice landowners to permit hunting on their land in the intensive harvest zone. The program will pay hunters \$200 for a positive deer and also pay the landowner from whose land the animal is harvested \$200. If taken on public land, the hunter will get \$200. If funds from the \$250,000 reward fund remain after payment for positives, all hunters who submit samples for testing from the intensive harvest zone will be entered into a drawing for \$20. If enough funds are left, all hunters who submit a sample will receive the \$20 incentive payment. The program is a cooperative effort between the DNR and Whitetails Unlimited, with Whitetails Unlimited administering the fund.

There are two federal register notices that should be reviewed by states and others and the appropriate comments made. One is a notice from APHIS reference cost sharing efforts to combat animal disease outbreaks. It was published in the July 8, 2003 Federal Register, pages 40541-40553 and is titled "Cost-Sharing for Animal and Plant Health Emergency Programs." The comment deadline has been extended to November 7, 2003. The second notice is from the Food and Drug Administration and was published on September 16, 2003, pages 54233-54234 and is titled "Guidance for Industry on Use of Material from Deer and Elk in Animal Feed; Availability. It states that comments may be submitted at any time. All should review these documents and make the appropriate comments. They can be accessed on the Internet at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/frcont03.html

An article in Nature has caused a flurry of reporters to state that CWD is transmitted easier than previously thought. In reality, the research by Mike Miller and Beth Williams is validating what most of us already thought. The article reports on transmission studies conducted in Colorado and shows that mule deer can transmit the disease from animal to animal more readily than maternally. This has fueled the bait and feed debate in Wisconsin and is being used by reporters to indicate that baiting and feeding still need to be banned.

The Wisconsin baiting and feeding controversy continues. The Natural Resources Board stood by science and refused to compromise on the ban. Therefore, the Legislative committee did not approve the regulations and as of now the baiting and feeding ban has expired and baiting and feeding is now legal in most of Wisconsin. Several counties have either already enacted their own ban or are considering it. Additionally, the NRD Board passed a new ban covering 23 counties in the CWD area of Southern Wisconsin.

The Governor of North Dakota, John Hoeven, has signed a proclamation prohibiting the importation of whole carcasses of deer and elk from known CWD infected areas. The proclamation permits the importation of only cut and wrapped meat, boned out meat, quarters or other parts of meat without the head or spinal column attached, hides with no head attached or clean skull plates with antlers attached. The CWD Alliance website (www.cwd-info.org) has a table showing the carcass rules by state.

The Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus CWD Task Force will hold a briefing and round table discussion on CWD and the next steps on September 23 in Washington, D.C. Bobby Accord, Administrator of APHIS, Greg Smith of USGS, Gary Wolfe of the CWD Alliance, Casey Stemler of the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bruce Morrison of NGPC have been invited to participate in the briefing and discussion. The Task Force hopes to formulate a plan for moving the National CWD Plan and its implementation documents forward at a faster pace.